

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A WESTERN JOURNAL OF FACT AND OPINION

DECEMBER 23, 1935

Jan 17 '36

**AMERICAN SKELETON:
TENANT FARMER**

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BELONGS!"**

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PACIFIC WEEKLY

A Western Journal of Fact and Opinion

VOLUME III

MONDAY, DECEMBER 23, 1935

NUMBER 25

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NOTES AND COMMENT

VICTORIES

DURING the past two weeks there have been signal victories for humanity and commonsense. Probably the most important of these, in its national significance and international importance, is the decision of Judge H. M. Dorsey of the Superior Court of Fulton County, Georgia, that Angelo Herndon was convicted under a law which is unconstitutional. This is the "slave insurrection law", dating back to 1866, and was used in the arrest of Herndon when he was leading a peaceful demonstration of Negro and white jobless in an appeal for food and shelter. He was sentenced to eighteen years on the Georgia chain gangs.

The case of Leo Gallagher, charged with "rioting", dismissed after a second trial resulted in a hung jury, nine for acquittal and three for conviction, is dealt with in more detail elsewhere on this page.

The San Mateo county board of education is to be congratulated on its decision, in face of fascist and American Legion pressure, to retain John Iliff, economics teacher, on the faculty of the San Mateo Junior College. It was charged by the Legion and a few intolerants in the district that Mr. Iliff had visited Soviet Russia, had joined in singing the Internationale at a meeting in San Francisco and, most absurd of all, had advocated before his students the overthrow of the United States government.

Perhaps more important than the board's action is the spirited comment on it from the Ventura County Star of December 11, indicating a foresight and wisdom rare in California's daily press. It reads:

Our congratulations to the school trustees of San Mateo junior college for dismissing charges of radicalism brought against John Iliff, economics teacher, by certain super-patriotic or super-heated citizens who have yielded to an attempt by yellow newspapers to substitute Hitlerism for Americanism.

Mr. Iliff, the board finds, is a competent and patriotic teacher whose only crime has been an intelligent interest

in what is going on in the world and an attempt to give his students the facts.

This action by the San Mateo trustees should have a good effect on other boards that are under pressure from minority groups and from vindictive newspapers to violate American principles and turn our schools into propaganda agencies for special privilege. And we hope that the rank and file of people will do a little thinking as to just how representative of the men who fought for democracy and freedom in 1918 some of our more rabid red-baiters are.

CALENDAR OF FRAME-UPS

THE second trial of Leo Gallagher, Elaine Black and Paula Morton, charged with "rioting" in Mission Dolores Park on March 17, 1934, ended with another hung jury in Judge Lazarus' court December 9.

The previous jury had stood nine to three for conviction. This time it was nine to three for acquittal. The nine jurors, seven women and two men, who stood for acquittal, surrounded the defendants at the close of the trial, shook their hands and assured them: "We're with you in your fight for free speech."

It was a dramatic trial and of great significance in the struggle to maintain our democratic rights in the face of the fascist attacks of the Chamber of Commerce, Industrial Association and William Randolph Hearst. On December 11 Judge Lazarus dismissed the case from the calendar and this attempt to disbar Leo Gallagher is, for the time being, defeated.

Anita Whitney, convicted of "false swearing", with sentence of 300 days in jail or \$600 fine (later paid by a relative), is a good example of the power of the middle class. Louise Todd, arrested and tried on the identical charge of perjury, was convicted of perjury, a felony, instead of a misdemeanor, and sentenced to one to fourteen years in prison. She was denied probation, though the state of her health justified it and the probation officer even recommended it.

The middle class should realize this power and use it for all it is worth in opposing the rising tide of fascism. The Whitney case should be used in a campaign to demand the shortest sentence for Louise Todd when her case comes before the prison board next year.

The trial of the four scalers charged with murder is now going on in Judge Lile Jack's court. Leo Gallagher and George Anderson are attorneys for three of the defendants; Archie Brown is acting as his own lawyer. This is a very serious case—an attempt on the part of the Industrial Association to frame four active leaders in the scalers' strike of last fall which was eventually won by the scalers. The men are accused of having thrown a fellow union men from the window of the Union Hall during a fracas started by stool pigeons at a union meeting September 21, 1935.

James McNamara, the oldest political prisoner in the world, who on December 10 completed his 24th year at San Quentin, has been removed to Folsom Prison. The warden gives no reason for the change, says it is merely part of the prison routine. This climaxes a long series of discriminations against McNamara. His friends should write the warden and the

prison board and insist on knowing why this has been done and demand that he be returned to San Quentin.

Geoffrin and Finklestein, recently arrested and held for deportation, have not yet had their hearing. After much trouble Geoffrin was recently released on bail but Finklestein is still held at Angel Island.

Liberal Americans who want to help in the fight against fascism can perform an enormous service by putting up their securities as bail in these frame-ups. The National Committee for Defense of Political Prisoners urges such friends of liberty to do this.

LOS ANGELES OPERA BOUFFE

BECAUSE human beings who actually work, and on whose services depend in the main the success of any financial venture, are beginning to realize that only through militant and concerted action can they place their claims for consideration on a par with business contracts, the Los Angeles Grand Opera Company, Incorporated, has once more folded up.

It was intended that because of the lack of patronage the recent "festival" would close up with *Rusticana* and *Pagliacci* on the night of November 30. But Merle Armitage, manager of the Philharmonic Auditorium, made a business "pact" with the company which would assure him at least a part of the much past-due rental for the building. So *La Boheme*, *Lucia di Lammermoor* and *Madame Butterfly* were scheduled for December 2, 3 and 4 respectively.

But it appears that the Opera Company reckoned, as it was compelled to, with the landlord, but failed to reckon, as it didn't think it had to, with those on whom it depended to produce the operas. The cast wanted its money, too, or some such an agreement as the landlord had received, that it would get it. The cast struck. It stood its ground. It wouldn't sing and it wouldn't act—not on empty stomachs, it wouldn't.

There were no operas on December 2, 3 and 4, and Dr. Peter Riccardi and Boris Charsky, founder and general director respectively, of the opera company, learned something they had better remember in the future. Even an opera singer, esthetic, temperamental and what not, is worthy of his hire.

Verily, the songsters have started moving toward a united front.

NOT MEETING THE ISSUE

LAST week the Commonwealth Club of San Francisco, before 200 people, held a symposium on the California agriculture problem, the first of its kind, in which all sides—large and small farmers, organizers and agricultural workers—were stated to have been represented. Actually L. K. Marshall, who owns 80 acres in Lodi, did not exactly represent the "small" farmers; he was anti-union, whereas many small farmers have been pro-union and sympathetic to the migratory workers.

Roy M. Pike of Vernalis, the "large grower", thought the migratory labor problem should be left to the growers to solve. The government he thought impractical because they were not growers. He was against unions—of any kind—and his main proposal was for controlled marketing of agricultural products "so that the market wouldn't be glutted and prices ruined".

Both farmers thought any camps built by the government should be left to the entire operation of the growers and

Mr. Marshall thought the migrants should pay rent.

Jack Neill, transient laborer from Porterville, who gave the workers' viewpoint, in the words of our informant "stole the meeting. Lean, gaunt-looking, dressed in shabby clothes, he presented a decided contrast to the sleek audience". (The meeting was held with a banquet at the Hotel St. Francis.) He came in after the dinner and was the only speaker who had no prepared speech. "But his homely eloquence, sincere and straight from the heart, about the pitiful working conditions and the difficulties of organizing to improve these conditions, due to opposition of growers and authorities, made a profound impression. At the end of his speech he received an ovation, so much so that the Chairman had to promise him more time."

Nathan, the "union organizer", made few practical suggestions. He attacked violence of growers, corrupt A. F. of L. officials and communist-led unions impartially.

The Club's section on agriculture in its eleven resolutions stated that to raise standards of living for migrants would benefit California agriculture (the farmers and their organs usually write as if it would ruin the industry), that present housing and immigration laws should be enforced, (no attempt is made to do this at present, so that Archbishop Hanna was shocked at the Fact-Finding Commission at Visalia—he had been one time President of the Housing Commission); that violence was to be deplored by whomever it was used, and that Federal Labor camps should be extended. Weakly and somewhat nullifying all their work, however, the section believed these should not be under federal control, that migrants should be registered (the Club must know that such registration would be used as a black-list, that none should receive camp benefits who "indulged in unlawful propaganda" (this might mean anything but the employers would see that it meant strike propaganda or any agitation for betterment), and that migratory labor is essential to California agriculture.

The problem was thus hardly attacked. There was no mention of the "Cold Terror" the Associated Farmers have instituted and described by McWilliams and Klein in a recent

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LOUIS B. SCOTT

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Ten cents a copy. Two dollars a year. One dollar for six months. Twenty-five cents for one month's trial. Canadian: Two dollars and twenty-five cents a year. Foreign: Two dollars and fifty cents.

Nation article, and no suggestion that wages should be raised when profits increase, as they have done considerably this year. There was no mention of the right to organize, strike and picket. Thus the dinner and club skirted the fringes of the problem but did not bite into it.

In the agriculture section of the Club are owners of large agricultural interests and one is a high official of the powerful California Packing Corporation. So the recommendations might be considered semi-official from the growers' associations and perhaps the best that can be expected from that quarter. Do they eliminate the need to organize for better conditions?

Jack Warnick, who spoke in the discussion period, said no; he also told how the organizers of the Union which bettered conditions were now in prison for from one to fourteen years for that; but even that, he said, did not solve the migratory labor problem.

THE INGENIOUS USE of "grips", electricians, handy-men, script girls, bystanders and curious visitors to set will help Paramount save on salaries to extras and bit-players in Director Robert Florey's *Preview*, studio murder-mystery. While thousands of unemployed actors swarm Hollywood's Christmas-decorated boulevards, await desperately the beginning of Gilmore Brown's local WPA drama projects, in *Preview* union studio workers unknowingly "scab" for actors. Picture-within-a-picture, *Preview* depicts murder in a studio while film is in production, shows technical side of picture-making. Since studio workers are just as anxious to see themselves in pictures as cosmopolites or provincials, studio cuts costs.

LINCOLN STEFFENS SPEAKING--

ERNEST T. WEIR says I am all wrong about business, that it has never been in politics till now that the President has stepped into or on industry and represented farmers, labor and other interests, the business men have been forced to act. Poor devils! They hate to get their hands soiled; the politicians used to do all the dirty work, especially the Republicans. It is sad.

TOO BAD PACIFIC WEEKLY cannot get and print a picture of Mr. Weir, as the big dailies do. His portrait shows that he is honest and sincere. He is in a position not to know the rotten politics that is done all the time for him and his. He probably never went forth as I had to and saw and heard the corrupt things done on his good name. His portrait illustrates his innocent speech, as mine would prove my error.

WISH BUSINESS could have a party, all its own. Labor is moving toward a Labor party, and Labor proposes to name its party after itself and the Farmers—Farmer and Labor Party. That's honest and clear. Let's drop Republican and Democratic and have two straight parties, one for Business men and the other for the workers and producers, and so sincerely go right into politics without any other politicians.

ANOTHER LESSON in the news this week was published when the British Ambassador notified us that his government wasn't going to bother to pay the installment they owed on

their debt of honor to us. That's what I call gentlemanly business.

MILWAUKEE, a Socialist city government, has empowered its mayor or his police to close any factory that refuses to bargain with representatives of a majority of its employees. In one week a seven weeks' strike was settled.

THE CHINESE STUDENTS, boys and girls, are out in the streets protesting the Japanese conquest. Too late, of course. The low-brow peasants and workers are much more effective, with their revolution.

JAMES B. McNAMARA, a personal friend of mine, a distinguished man, who was sentenced to the penitentiary for a life term for dynamiting the Los Angeles Times, has been transferred from San Quentin to Folsom "to break up too close associations". When McNamara and the other A.F. of L. dynamiters, who were making an official fight against the violent employers' associations, were convicted, I was a party to an agreement between Business and Labor to let the guilty labor officials off before their terms were up. The publisher and owner of the Times remembers how and why it was done that way. He, too, knows as I do that that gentlemen's agreement was kept in no particular. Organized Labor despised me for not knowing that there were no gentlemen to keep promises of honor. I have learned that now. And so does J. B. McNamara know it. He kept his side of the bargain, he and his brother and his colleagues; the state and the business men did not. They do not. J.B. took and he takes it "on the chin". He is one of the very few convicts who have had the nerve and the courage to stand a long prison term without weakening mentally. He never became "prison stir-minded" in all his twenty-odd years. A remarkable record—a distinguished man. J. B. McNamara kept pace in prison with the evolutionary progress of the world outside. He has grown in his isolation as free men have not. Society never broke his spirit. Labor, organized Labor, has no finer, more loyal hero than my friend J. B. who may be going to a starker prison for that reason.

The warden at Folsom is an experienced veteran in prison management who will understand profoundly what I mean when I urge him to take thought not to break this tried and sterling human spirit. And the veteran editor and publisher of the Los Angeles Times will understand when I urge him to take soft firm steps to keep our word of honor with J. B. McNamara and the other dynamiters and let them out where strong men can be very useful now.

A HITCH happened in our civilized peace efforts. France and England reached an agreement for a partition of Ethiopia and handed a fair hunk of it to Italy, keeping very little for England. And, by gosh, the Ethiopians demurred; they must think it is their country, and their peace; as well as their war. Barbarians!

HOW LONG can it last? Don't ask me that; can't trust me; just tell me in your own words. And don't laugh. Say it with tears. The New Yorker writes it all up. The New Yorker is one of our modern muckrakers and it gets by by laughing more than we did and writing in a better style; they laugh and make us laugh. How long can it all last, the wars, the peaces, the crooked business, the representative politics.

WHY STUDY MARX TODAY?

BY HAROLD M. KING

(EDITOR'S NOTE—This is the first of a series of discussions on the social and economic writings of Karl Marx. They will appear fortnightly in PACIFIC WEEKLY. They are being written by a California teacher, but are designed principally to serve as the basis for a wider discussion of the application of Marxian principles to the social and economic problems of the present.

Two revolutionary works dominated the thought of the latter half of the nineteenth century. Darwin's *Origin of The Species* blasted the ground from under the religious metaphysics; Karl Marx's *Capital* shook the very foundations of the complacent capitalist economics. The impact of these thinkers dispelled much of the confusion within their respective fields, and started the twentieth century on the path of scientific research.

Darwin's theories have been developed in our universities. The capitalists have managed to harness biology to their profit machine. Marx's theories are forbidden in the same universities. They describe the rise and fall of the capitalist class and map out an effective method by which the working class can supplant it. The boards of education and regents very wisely conclude that these theories endanger their jobs and property. It matters not how logical are the premises and conclusions; nor does it matter to them that history has proved the correctness of Marx's major predictions. They function not as teachers intent upon the truth, but as political appointees protecting their class interests.

Although our school boards forbid the study of Marx, no law has yet reached this extreme. We Americans are still free to read, study and discuss political economy theories. Comparatively few take advantage of this opportunity. Within our State hundreds of thousands of Democrats, Utopians and Epics have been loosed from their old moorings by the depression. They see the insanity of an economic system that creates poverty and want in the midst of plenty. They desire peace passionately but see the world rushing madly on to war. Marx, and his collaborator, Engels, faced these same conditions, analyzed them, and drew from their analysis a basic law which explains the confusion of the modern world.

Some of the leaders of liberal and progressive movements object to the study of Marx on these grounds: (1) Our epoch differs from all preceding because within ours there is want in the midst of plenty; (2) Political conditions have changed. Marx wrote in autocratic Prussia; we live in democratic America; (3) The class struggle, which is the basis of Marx's major premise, does not exist in middle-class America. The Epic and Utopian programs are founded on these three tenets. Let us therefore examine their validity.

Is this the first era of want in the midst of plenty? In 1847 Marx and Engels wrote in the *Communist Manifesto*: "For many a decade past, the history of industry and commerce have been but the revolt of modern productive forces . . . against the property relations . . . It is enough to mention the commercial crises that by their periodic return put the existence of the entire bourgeois society on trial, each time more threateningly . . . In these crises there breaks out an epidemic . . . of over-production. Industry and commerce seem to be destroyed. And why? Because there is . . . too much means of subsistence, too much industry and too much commerce . . . And how does the bourgeoisie get over these crises? On the one hand by enforced destruction of a mass of

productive forces; on the other hand by the conquest of new markets, and by a more thorough exploitation of the old ones." Does not Marx in describing "many a decade" before 1847 also describe our present depression? Are not the differences between yesterday and to-day merely those of degree? Surely Marx's exhaustive studies of British conditions in crises should teach us much.

Political conditions have changed. We do live in a democratic form of government. Otherwise we should not be permitted to study any basic laws of social change. If there is any value to history, however, we should have learned from fascist Europe, and from some of our own Chambers of Commerce, that democracy is in danger. The flood of popular literature recently published has done much to expose the control over our political machinery of our Morgans, Hearsts, Gianninis, Fleishhackers, etc. The fundamental question involved here is the relation of economic control to State power, and this problem has not changed with the form of the government. The Stuart kings fell because the then revolutionary business men controlling economic power desired their fall. Only when the government shall consist of the workers of hand and brain, who actually form the vast majority of the population, will majority rule be enabled to prevail. Marx discusses as much of this relation as he has noted. We shall have to include Lenin's development of Marx's theses to get the modern picture.

Some readers will consider it superfluous to argue the case of class struggle at this late date. They live so close to the daily struggle, they see it daily reflected in the newspapers. Yet there are some men, important politically, who deny that America is in the grips of a class struggle. In *We, People of America*, Upton Sinclair wrote: "Ours is not a working class country. Our workers act, speak and dress middle-class . . . They read middle-class newspapers, go to middle-class movies, listen to middle-class radios; and every last man and woman has the faith that their children are . . . going to grow up to be middle-class . . ." With this as his major premise he has denied that there exist imponderable differences between the rich middle-class and the poor. Wherefore he has called upon all classes including monopoly capitalism to help him put over the Epic Plan (see his letter in the *Nation* Nov 6). Marx starts with the class war because his observations have taught him that throughout the ages this struggle has persisted. "Freeman and slave, patrician and plebeian, lord and serf, guildmaster and journeyman", and now capital and labor have fought and will continue to fight until a new society can be formed that will be classless. And this is the goal for which Marx and Engels and their followers are fighting.

There can be no doubt that we are heading for a period of great ferment and turmoil. War in Africa and Asia; a bitter struggle between fascism and communism for Europe; domestic strife over relief, wages and civil rights. Throughout the nation there are millions anxious to utilize their efforts, if only those efforts do not prove futile, to correct the obvious wrongs. To those millions Marx and Engels would prove as valuable as an elementary course in radio telegraphy to those amateurs who love to tinker with radios. All efforts will be tied together by a common understanding of our problem, our obstacles, and methods which have proved in the past successful in overcoming those obstacles.

The next article will deal in detail with the *Communist Manifesto* (Marx and Engels 1847). This is available at all public libraries. For the sake of more interesting discussion, groups should get this pamphlet for collective study; after which they should comment on the expository article.

AN ALL-AMERICAN SKELETON: THE TENANT FARMER

BY CAROL GRISHAM

LAST spring some friends and I stopped by the yard of one of these tenant farmers up in Sonoma County. A lot of farmers in that part of the state have tried to go into bankruptcy under the Frazier Lemke Act, and this was the home of one who is a tenant of a big California bank and for six years has been struggling for livelihood. The woman was small, mild and not at all dauntless-looking. She was just sweeping out her house. We would be welcome to step in if—she said, laughing with embarrassment—we “could stand it”.

Her family consisted of her husband and a boy of eight. Her aged parents, too, were dependent and lived on their place. The farm consisted of about fifty acres, less than half in cultivation. There were a few fruit trees, some grapes, an alfalfa field. The rest they couldn't afford to keep up. Harvest Moon Farm was the name they had given the place.

The house into which we were welcomed was half-cabin, half-shack. I noticed where rain had trickled through in spouts and streams, and it wasn't difficult to imagine what an Iceland winter wind would make of the place.

We sat on boxes and a bed which occupied half the “front” room. The boy's bowl of goldfish sat on a table in the sun. From an old chest in the corner gleamed a flower basket made of bottle tops.

“How are you getting along?” was a question that was entirely unnecessary, but was asked apologetically.

The woman told us that out-of-dyed feed sacks she had got a wardrobe and underwear and bedding for the family. There was a dress “for good” which had cost fifty cents for material and had won a prize at a county demonstration contest. She had made crazy quilts, too, and traded them for a stove and bedstead—the one I was sitting on. I asked what she did when they had to buy shoes and things like that that they couldn't make.

She laughed at me. “We don't have to buy them if we can't. We just keep on with what's left of what we have. I feel bad we can't keep our boy dressed properly, but we just haven't the money to buy what we need . . . A woman wrote in a letter to our farm paper wanting to know why country children aren't healthier than city children; they have so much room to exercise in. It's strange folks don't seem to realize you can't live right on exercise and fresh air when there's no money. Then what good's the air and exercise?”

She said the place had no toilet, but that this never had been considered a hardship.

“There's nothing to harm out there behind the chicken coop, and nothing to harm you. We used to go to the foot of the bluff, but there's no one to see up here.”

Her husband had rigged up a tractor out of an old automobile and built the household furniture, she said. She herself ran the tractor when he was doing other things. Other times she cared for the chicks “like they was humans”, tended her family, baked, sewed, cleaned, tended the garden, helped press grapes, nursed her old parents and once a week walked to town to sell eggs and get the mail. There were just two things she'd like—not to have to ask for charity was first; and

then—“if only my boy doesn't have to be working like us all his life.” In afterthought she added, “If we just could get away and make something of our youth . . .” Even farmers, I thought, have the right to wish.

When her husband appeared, as he did about noon, we asked him how they ever came to stick to their tenancy of the place.

“Well,” he replied, “we were like the others. Six years ago farm income was good. We thought we'd own the place eventually. Most farmers wanted to own. I always worked on a farm and we wanted our own little place and I didn't have but a few hundred dollars—but it's all different now. Even if we had money to live we couldn't ever get enough over to pay on a mortgage and taxes and interest—it's only the banks and the government that have enough money to own land and to keep it going; us little fellows can't do it. If you can manage to live, that's all; being a tenant doesn't mean anything more about getting to own your farm. Why, I know dozens of farmers who rent their land—better off than us, they are—who wouldn't own a farm with the risk it means and the danger of mortgages being foreclosed. No, sir, it's only the government and the banks that can afford to own the farms.”

If this were so, I said, then what was the meaning of all the newspaper editorials and the government talk of the recovery of American agriculture? Leaving, that is (though I knew it was impossible), the matter of political ballyhoo out of the question.

“It means,” he said, “that right now prices for some farm produce aren't so low as they were in 1931 to 1933, that not so many farms are being taken away as then and not so many sheriffs being lynched by farmers who were foreclosed. That hasn't any meaning to me or the ones like me, though—we haven't even any shirts they could take away. What the government does for us—providing there's a good supply of labor in our families—yes, kids and women folks—is to give a patch of reclaimed soil and a horse and plow. That's what agricultural prosperity means to poor tenant farmers—being serfs and working for our keep. When the government officials blow about the upward trend of farming they keep mum about the farmers who can't give mortgages—we aren't anything to blow about.”

After supper we sat about the woodstove. There was just one oil lamp and the little boy borrowed it to go to bed by. The cracks in the seams of the stove gave a little glow of light—enough so that I could make out a long rifle hanging on the wall under a picture of Abe Lincoln and, half fooling, I asked if it were ornamental.

“No, sirree, that's to keep the hawks away from the chicks, though I do think it looks smart there under Abraham Lincoln,” the father said. “He was our emancipator,” he explained. And after a bit, “He was our emancipator,” he repeated. Someone made a sound in his throat like a laugh.

The next day I got home and I looked up an authentic account of American agriculture. There I read that of the 15,000 farmers added to California's farm population since

1930 most of them are tenant farmers and that their proportion over the whole country has been almost doubled by an inflow of two and a half million during the same time. In relative figures, about 40 per cent of California farmers and about 60 per cent of all American farmers—not only those of the South, but the two or three millions who have never seen a cotton field—are tenants like the family in Sonoma: farmers with "a good supply of labor in the family", who, irrespective of their relative standards of living, of low interest rates and of cheapness of land, *never will have surplus income enough to realize their ambition of making a down payment on farms of their own.*

It isn't my intention to suggest that every farm-tenant who is merely subsisting should be made a landlord, thus putting stays in the back of traditional American agriculture, as is the endeavor of the present Administration. My hope only is that I may point out the bad taste of government bankers, press agents, newspaper editors and the like who trumpet the recovery of farming but do not mention the larger part of the population that does the farming. It's as if they assumed prematurely the death of a group of incurables, who often, however, can subsist a surprisingly long while and in the face of almost any difficulty.

Unquestionably, under capitalism, our tenant farmers will continue to subsist as a great peasant class, more and more subject to the control of a fascist power. But with the loss of their chance of land ownership has gone their morale, their productive power and their incentive to be efficient; and capitalism has nothing to substitute for an inducement that, so far as farmers themselves are concerned, no longer induces. Even to one without knowledge of the psychology of tenant farmers or of the extent of their numbers, that politicians, press agents and bankers presume to discuss the recovery of agriculture without regarding the status and spirit of more than half the farm population gives certainty to the definition and existence of their class.

In talking with one farm family in Sonoma County, it was undeniable that I had also talked with three or four millions of farmers like them.



MR. LANDON ENTERTAINS

BY CHARLOTTE HAYES

WILLIAM RANDOLPH HEARST came to visit the governor of Kansas, in Topeka, center of the nation, early on the cold, sunny morning of December 10. In three private cars, he brought Arthur Brisbane, Eleanor Patterson and Henry Haskell, recent Pulitzer prize winner and editor of the Kansas City Star.

From the station, the party went to the governor's house where, with United States Senator Arthur Capper, sole owner of the Capper Publications, they were luncheon guests of Governor Alfred M. Landon and Mrs. Landon. Mrs. Landon was so typically an American home-maker that Mr. Hearst immediately envisioned her in the White House. She is the daughter of one of the wealthiest of Kansas bankers, even wealthier than her husband. Mr. Hearst felt that he could write columns and columns about her.

When he had finished his meringue glacé, William Randolph Hearst gave an interview to the Topeka press. "Governor Landon," he declared, smiling benevolently, "is the one man on whom leaders in all sections of the country can unite in selecting a New Deal opponent." Paul Block stated that were the Republican party convention to be held tomorrow all delegates would concur in nominating Alfred M. Landon to oppose Franklin D. Roosevelt as President of the United States.

Arthur Brisbane agreed with his employers that Mr. Landon was the logical Republican nominee in view of his gubernatorial record. Their views were based upon the fact that in three years of executive power, Mr. Landon has balanced the Kansas budget.

On December 10, twenty-two new applicants came to the Topeka Salvation Army asking for food, clothing, or work. Fifty transients appealed for aid. Of these fifty, thirty-five were refused all help at the state bureau for transients while the remaining fifteen, women and children, were cared for by the Salvation Army out of its yearly total fund of \$8500.00. Senator Arthur Capper, who enjoyed the boned chicken at the executive mansion, is a member of the board of the Salvation Army and recently helped arrange its appropriation.

The same cold, sunny morning, fifteen hundred men were put to work by the Works Project Administration at the wages of \$42.00 per month. They will receive their first pay checks since last spring, January 2. In Kansas, where the budgets have been balanced, forty-two thousand men are paid out of federal funds for work on WPA. Governor Landon has accepted \$750,000.00 from Washington. He has used federal workers in his offices and in making Kansas roads.

On December 10, the executive head of the Emergency Relief of Kansas was asked to state the amount of Kansas money being used for relief. He refused to give a figure, saying that the state relief was being taken over by WPA.

The commissioner, head of relief for Shawnee county in which the capital city is located, refused to state how many families were being given aid. When asked whether or no the figures were for public information, he issued the invitation to look through his files: . . . "if you can find them".

William Randolph Hearst sat with "Alf" M. Landon in the double living rooms of the executive mansion. At the same time, two aged parents dependent upon their son for support were denied relief money by the state. Their son was out of work. They owned their home. Until they take a government mortgage upon their house and have lived up to the amount of the loan, they will receive no aid. Doubtless, William Randolph Hearst could offer the United States a presidential nominee capable of solving the national housing problem as well as of balancing budgets were he to wait a year or two longer.

Mr. Hearst drank a highball and ate chicken, parsley potatoes and petits pois at Mr. Landon's table. At the same time, state employes sat down to bread and coffee. They were hard pressed to afford so much. Their salaries have suffered from ten to twenty-five per cent cuts within the past twelve months. Toll amounting to two per cent of their individual yearly salaries has been exacted for campaign purposes. In a single department of the Kansas government, thirteen thousand dollars were made and contributed to the state treasury while the members took their twenty-five per cent dock in wages. In the traffic division, a college graduate supports his family of four on a salary of one hundred dollars a month and is afraid to look for other work for fear of losing what he has.

William Randolph Hearst, Eleanor Patterson, Paul Block

and Henry Haskell left Topeka in the late afternoon. The doors of the executive mansion had scarcely closed behind them when they opened to admit Dorothy Thompson (Mrs. Sinclair Lewis).

Miss Thompson, hearty daughter of New York, sat at the table upon which Mr. Hearst had lately leaned his elbows. She lingered so long over her dinner with the Governor that she was late to the lecture she had scheduled. But she found herself "sick and full of apologies!"

Speaking to an audience which filled the Woman's Club auditorium to capacity, Dorothy Thompson displayed her early Methodist training. She spread the gospel of sweetness and light. She described her vision of a revived and glorified capitalist state. She cried: "It can happen here, but it won't."

Afterward she was honor guest at a reception. The buckle

on her long-skirted gold and black chiffon dinner dress had broken. She borrowed a pin for it. "It's the only dress I have," she said. And added hastily lest she seem humble, "The only one I have with me."

The wife of the lieutenant governor of Kansas was standing nearby. She was charmed by such informality. The lieutenant governor, who is a banker out of the state house, folded his pudgy hands over his bulging stomach. He approved of Miss Thompson.

Alfred M. Landon had not been able to stay at the Woman's Club for the reception. A man who balances budgets with empty stomachs, a man who is being named by William Randolph Hearst as the future President of the United States does not have much leisure. He hurried home for a midnight conference with Senator Arthur Capper and Arthur Brisbane.



"GEE, I'M GLAD MY DAD BELONGS!"

BY DEAN BESHICH

SEVERAL decades ago the late Jack London published his novel, *The Iron Heel*, in which he portrayed precisely the present role of the American Legion. And unquestionably, when Sinclair Lewis' "Minute Men" arrive, at the bidding of the Bank of America and Hearst, those of us who refuse to work for 50 cents a day with a bayonet at our backs will be lined up against a wall and shot. In this manner the Legion will live up to its slogan, "Serving America". At least, that seems to be the indication of the Legion's evolution by the wish fulfilments of its bureaucratic leaders. An era of "buddy" patriotism is just around the corner. With the agitation for the bonus due to reach great heights when Congress convenes in January, the buddies and Hearst will attempt to feel their oats. And woe betide those who fail to "Heil", and woe betide all "furriners". Unless the rank and file in the Legion wakes up.

In 1919, after the world was made safe for "Democracy", I joined the American Legion, Post No. 5, in Oakland. I failed at that time to understand its significance as the tool of finance capital. I am one of those who have learned since the war. Some of us have learned much. Others blow tin horns in Armistice Day parades and call it patriotism.

Chief of Police Walter J. Petersen of Oakland in 1919 controlled the Legion as Post Commander. In the ensuing row over the bureaucratic methods by which he was maneuvered into office, many of us dropped out of the organization and we have never rejoined. The great post-war strike wave resulting from wage slashes began. Deprived of being heroes in France Legionnaires became strike breakers—at home. They attacked the I. W. W. hall in Centralia, Washington, during which two were shot. There ensued a reign of terror comparable only to present-day Italy and Germany. Many were beaten, hanged and jailed, particularly I.W.W. union organizers. The Legion was serving America.

The Pacific Coast shipyard strike of 1919 was lost. The Seattle general strike was lost. The Oakland street car strike was lost by the well known nauseating device of an impartial

arbitration board. Unofficially the Legion furnished scabs in almost every strike, including armed guards for Chinese coolies imported to break the Cuban rebellion and protect the Fleishhacker sugar interests in Cuba. The argument that "These fellows took your jobs at big wages while you were saving the world for democracy" worked perfectly.

In the longshoremen's strike on the San Francisco waterfront in 1919 the shipowners sent for the Legionnaire, Chief of Police Walter J. Petersen, and installed him as "employment manager" for the Waterfront Employers' Association. The legitimate longshoremen's union was smashed and Petersen organized the "American Plan" scab company union, known as the blue book union, and inaugurated the intolerable conditions which led up to the Great Maritime Strike of 1934. The waterfront was coolie-ized and Americanized and the American Legion was despised.

To-day the American Legion prides itself on being the leading opponent of civil liberties in the United States. It has an espionage system working closely with the red squads of various cities which would make the abandoned O.G.P.U. turn green with envy. Its top officials are bankers and banker-controlled. It accepts contributions from the Hearst Newspapers, the Chamber of Commerce, the Industrial Association and other red baiting and fascist and reactionary organizations. The American Legion top officialdom is behind every representative movement in the United States, from "Disaster Plan" ordinances to advocating exiling labor organizers to Alaska, similar to Czarist Russian Terrorism.

The Red Network, which includes President Roosevelt and some members of his cabinet as "Communists", is the American Legion Bible. In San Francisco the Legion's "Subversive Activities Committee" represents the most stupid and vicious of the Legion's fascist tendencies. This committee consists of approximately 400 members of which H. Raye Gleason is chairman. Most of the members of this committee have fat city hall jobs. Gleason himself is an official of the Bank of America. The duties of the Subversive Activities

Committee consists of attending meetings and keeping files of radicals and suspected radicals. On one SERA research project alone, out of 120 employees H. Ray Gleason had listed 103 as dangerous radicals and agitators. The patriotism of the Subversive Activities Committee is manifested by spying and snooping on liberals, Socialists and Communists, intimidation by telephone and telegram, and by calling upon suspected liberals and threatening them.

The entire membership of the Office and Professional Workers Union of San Francisco is listed in Gleason's files as "Reds". Members of the casts of the plays, *Peace on Earth* and *Waiting for Lefty*, have been intimidated and threatened by an agent of this committee named Silverstein. The San Francisco Police Departments, Red Squad and Raye Gleason work hand in hand. Frank Belgrano, Past National Commander of the Legion, and Vice-President of the Bank of America, is also Gleason's boss. Like the Ku Klux Klan the Legion works in the dark.

A nurse, a member of the O. & P. W. union, obtained a position in the public health service of Kern County. Miss S. worked just four days when a letter arrived, signed by H. Raye Gleason, stating that she was a dangerous radical, a Communist agitator and active in Communist circles in San Francisco. Miss S. knew nothing of Communism, her brother was past commander of a Legion Post in Detroit. Needless to state, Miss S. was fired from her position.

Four other nurses, also members of this union, were black-listed in every hospital in San Francisco as a result of letters written by H. Raye Gleason. One, whose father had been an old friend of Attorney General U. S. Webb, secured the aid of Annette Adams and in an interview with officials of the

Industrial Association, was reinstated. Another, whose husband started the first American Legion Post in the State of Washington and was an officer in the World War, was fired from the Veterans Hospital, as a result of information given Gleason by snoopers employed as orderlies. A San Francisco writer and poet is continually threatened by means of telegrams. His ancestors came to America 160 years ago. The Legion Serves America.

At the "Hearst Trial", held in the Building Trades Temple in San Francisco, Raye Gleason attended in the role of a secret spy. Informed of his presence Attorney Leo Gallagher, who prosecuted Hearst, called upon Gleason to come upon the stage and defend Hearst. Raye Gleason sneaked out the door.

An agent of the Legion's O.G.P.U. called upon the producer of the play, *Peace on Earth*, in an attempt to intimidate her. During the interview her husband, a prominent attorney, entered the room and recognized this agent as the perpetrator of a fraud for whom he had issued a warrant some time previously. The agent stammered an apology and sneaked out the door. He had been selling information about radicals to the Industrial Association.

Professor John C. Iliff, who visited the Soviet Union recently and discussed the matter with his students at San Mateo Junior College, is the latest target of Gleason and his buddies. Gleason and fellow Legionnaires succeeded in making themselves ridiculous at a hearing before the Board of Education. Iliff was not removed from the faculty.

Thus the Legion "Serves America" to the delight of the small boy on the billboard who stares in raptures at the Legion insignia and murmurs: "Gee, I'm Glad My Dad Belongs."



DANGER OF THE TOWNSEND PLAN

BY G. E. DEAN

THE most effective United Front in this country at the next elections may turn out to be, to our surprise, the Townsendites brushing aside all questions of party, politics and Save-the-Constitutionism, to put into office those Congressmen (and possibly a President) who will vote the Townsend Plan into existence. To them only one issue is important, and many a man with no qualifications other than that he is for the Plan may slide serenely into Congress.

Will the Townsend Plan work? The Administration, by its silence, has said "No", but has not said why it is not feasible. The press, on the whole, says "No", yet avoids loss of circulation by declining to get into controversies with its subscribers over the arguments against the Plan.

The Wise Father, confronted with the necessity of discouraging his eight-year-old Little Johnnie from building an airplane in the back yard, will not try to pooh-pooh his son out of it, but will carefully explain just why it is not practical. The American people deserve to be told why the Townsend Plan is impractical, and our Father-in-the-White-House has been afraid to tell them. So Little Johnnie and All-the-Kids-in-the-Neighborhood have rebelled, and next year they are going to put a New Father into the White House—one who will tell them they can build an airplane in the back yard,

and that they can fly it when it is done.

The Townsend Plan is not so simple in its economic ramifications as it may sound, and it is quite probable that more than 95 per cent of the people have arrived at their conclusions without either sufficient facts or logic. In lieu of a more authoritative study of the subject, it may be valuable to see if there are certain basic reasons why the Plan is impractical. If the Plan really is to cost only 2 per cent, and will put people at work, and will bring about recovery, it is the answer to the prayers of about a quarter of our population who now need relief. If it will only work more hardship on the destitute and create more poverty, the Townsends should be told why.

Squadrons of accurate figures are unnecessary in studying the principles involved. These few fairly-accurate items will do for our arithmetic: Total National Income (wages, dividends, etc.), 48 billion yearly; Amount necessary to give each person over 60 a monthly income of \$200, 24 billion yearly. No matter whether the 24 billion yearly is raised by a transactions tax of 2 per cent based on transactions totaling 1,200 billion, or whether by a 1 per cent tax based on 2,400 billions of yearly transactions, or whether raised by a 50 per cent sales tax based on retail sales totaling 48 billion yearly

(assuming that our entire national income were spent each year), the result is the same—We, The People, can buy only about two-thirds as much as before, while They, The Townsends, use the other third of our money to buy the other third of the goods we were unable to buy. Are *more* commodities being consumed? Is there *more* money in circulation? (Since a book would be required to list all the exceptions and qualifications that might be made, it will not be attempted here. It is the principles with which we are concerned.)

Few people realize the huge number of "transactions" that take place before commodities are sold in the retail stores. Consider a radio. Iron, aluminum and coal mines; ships and railroads; electric, steam and motor power; blast furnaces, machine shops, tool makers; lumber, wire, glue, paper and insulation industries; advertising agencies, salesmen, managers, foremen, men, men. All have to do with the making of your radio. The Townsend Bill (H. R. 7154) states that a 2 per cent tax must be paid on each sale, barter or exchange; on all charges for interest, rent, commissions, fees; on all personal services (wages); on all transportation, telephone, telegraph, radio, amusement, recreation, education, art, advertising, and any and all other service of any and every kind whatsoever. In other words, every time any sort of a transaction is made, 2 per cent please! During the dozens or hundreds of transactions performed while the radio is being born from the bowels of the earth and the toil of man, the tax is paid and included among the costs of doing business. Is anyone so naive as to believe that the Capitalists pay these taxes out of their profits? No, they merely raise the price of the ore, or the coal, or the electric power, or the half-finished gadget, and pass the tax along to the next company concerned, which passes it along (with his added) to the next, and the next . . . and the ultimate buyer finds his \$50 radio is now costing \$75 or more. Nobody can figure how much prices will soar, but the old adage that "you can't get something for nothing" is still true, and if we give the old people yearly a sum nearly equal to our present national debt, it will throw the great masses into unendurable poverty.

The arguments of the Townsends sound swell—if you accept them on faith and cannot do a little analysis. It will start the factories? Not if merely different people are spending the same total amount of money. Put five million young people to work in the place of old people? Not if the great majority of the old people now gainfully employed are grubbing a few dollars a month from worthless farms. Nobody will notice a 2 per cent tax? They will if it is a transactions tax equivalent to half of everyone's income. The pensions would be "revolving" monthly, and come right back to the people who paid the tax? Yes, but the automobiles and clothes and pork chops don't come back to the people who paid the tax. But Dr. Townsend is such an honest man; you can't suspect him of advocating a plan that is not good? Undoubtedly honest, and let him sell you Long Beach lots or set your broken leg; but beware when he wants to be the chief engineer for the Golden Gate Bridge or for our National Economy. But 25 million Townsends can't be wrong? Yes . . . they could be.

Now this short article does not purport to show exactly why the plan is not feasible, and therefore Townsends may spare their attempts to answer it. Generalities, such as these, prove nothing. The purpose is to call attention to the little recognized power that ten to thirty million Townsendites will have in the coming elections, and to appeal for an authoritative and detailed analysis of the plan so that the people (even

the Townsends) may judge from facts and not from fancies.

Universally we want to make comfortable the last years of the old folks. But when nearly a quarter of our people are on the brink of starvation, and millions are actually hungry and cold and in rags, can we afford to support in luxury the comparatively small group of old persons? If the Townsends are not working for their private profit and really believe their plan will bring prosperity, let them advocate the same plan except that the money raised by the tax would be divided equally among all of our 125 million people . . . then every one would get back again the tax which he paid, and the poor would be no poorer . . . and by requiring that the pensions be spent in thirty days, the mystic Townsend "Revolving" would be achieved to just the same extent.

HOLLYWOOD-WEEK

(Hollywood News Bureau—Special to PACIFIC WEEKLY)

MARKET REPORT

NO CHEERING from poorly paid, insecure Universal employees greets news that company's stock shoots up 14 points to new high, due to banker control . . . with silence also at M-G-M where yearly net profit was \$7,579,000 or \$1.01 net increase of profit on each share preferred stock over last year . . . Yearly operating losses of Warners for 1933 (\$6,291,748) and 1934 (\$2,530,513), this year were transformed to \$674,158 net profit . . . Columbia Broadcasting System (not to be outdone, declares extra quarterly dividend of \$1.00 above the usual 40¢.

PROPAGANDA

A BARRAGE of films of, by and for presidential candidates of both political parties may be expected by U. S. film-goers between now and November, 1934, with films shifting from covert propaganda to overt publicity. Even more blatant than the anti-Sinclair newsreels which the California theatre-going public remembers only too well during the vicious gubernatorial campaign in 1934, the films now planned will be anti-New Deal and pro-Roosevelt with a vengeance, not subtle, but slogan-bearing. Pictorial Film Library, Inc., is making a series of short subjects based on Roosevelt and his administration with the help of Stephen Early, presidential right hand. Ralph Like, film producer, is soon to confer with Farley in Washington on two full-length features and 24 short subjects to be produced especially for the Roosevelt campaign. On the other hand, the League for the Defense of the Constitution is planning a feature film to be made out of "stock" shots, attacking the New Deal as unconstitutional. The Crusaders, reactionary organization, is also planning anti-Roosevelt film aid.

Initial plan is to sell films to theatres or, where possible, to get theatres to play them free of charge. What will entertainment-buying, propaganda-getting U. S. audiences say?

TECHNIQUE

ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND DOLLARS has been sunk in research on new color camera by Paramount, which now

finds process impractical. Not impractical, however, is Pathe's announcement of a natural color newsreel for 1936. Eastern production on a large scale is once more a possibility as control of Eastern Service studios in Astoria passes back to Paramount which plans to shoot at least six pictures a year in New York. Hollywood technicians and stars will migrate East, but New York stage players will fill in featured and subordinate roles.

BLACKMAIL THREAT

LACK OF FOREIGN MARKET disturbs Europe's nationalistic, fascist film producers. Sole export market is U. S. which, foreign producers have found, can be forced to buy product. Since European audiences demand Hollywood films, governments have evolved "quota" system, forcing Hollywood producers either to buy domestic films or to invest capital in domestic production in direct proportion to the number of Hollywood films. First to realize potentialities of blackmailing quota-system was canny England which got big investment of foreign capital from Paramount, Warners, and—in addition—succeeds in selling rarely-good, major product here, is building up a strong home industry. Threat of penalties last week forced United Artists to agree to release product of *Les Films Artistiques de France* during 1936, controlled by government-controlled Havas News Agency. U. S. producers are now ready to capitulate to German, Austrian, Italian and Hungarian demands, may try by means of fancy ballyhoos, to pass product off on U. S. audiences, so to get back their costs.

PLOT

WARNERS' SCHEME to trim salaries of featured players offers new problem to Screen Actors' Guild. When work slows up on home lot, Warners lend contract player to independent studio until his next home assignment, thus hoping to get rid of interim salary expense which, otherwise, would have to be charged off against cost of next home-lot production. Shown the script, the actor recognizes film as a "quickie" requiring 14 hours a day, finds himself in a much-too-minor role, screams, yelps or mutters loud enough for Jack or Harry Warner to hear. Actor is then suspended for indie's production time, loses home-lot salary for that period! Warners save!

MANNA FALLS ON BROADWAY

SAM GOLDWYN's unthrifty \$200,000 record-buy of Broadway's *Jumbo*, financed by Jock Whitney of Technicolor, brings news that at least 24 plays on Broadway this season were, are or will be financed by the film industry. Already beginning to hold up production until a play secures film backing, many commercial Broadway managers will soon deny production to any script Hollywood doesn't finance. For those who want Hollywood's money, not their own integrity, here is what the film producers will want: Innocuous comedies; mother-love dramas; Cinderella, wish-fulfillment stories; mysteries; G-men yarns; labor libels and morphy musicals. Thus does censorship extend its scope, for the first requirement of majority of future stage material will be that it contain nothing frowned on by Cinema Czar Will Hays. This will automatically bar truthful portrayals of labor problems, the depression, foreign affairs, or the life of Mr. and Mrs. Average American.

BOOKS

IS A VEIN OF IRON ENOUGH?

BY MARION PINKHAM

THE sunshine was spinning . . . Clouds flew in the sky. The road beyond the church reared and plunged into the shaggy hills. The hills shook themselves and rushed headlong among the mountains."

This is a prose of true simplicity. But it has a stalwart quality which strikes the keynote for Ellen Glasgow's latest novel, *Vein of Iron**. For the book concerns the lives of simple, stalwart people, their adherence to a code made up of plain living, duty to God and attention to what Grandmother would think.

The sweetly ironical note heard in *The Romantic Comedians* and *They Stooped to Folly* is silent in the story of the Fincastles and McBrides of Shut In Valley. And not only does this record the lives of John and Mary Evelyn, their daughter Ada, Grandmother Fincastle and Aunt Maggie, but a host of shadowy figures who make up Family Tradition: Fincastle men who had helped to break the wilderness, Fincastle wives who had trudged wild trails, helped to build houses, borne children . . . No book was ever more backward-looking in its point of view than *Vein of Iron*.

There is good craftsmanship here. The little ten-year-old Ada whom we meet at the turn of the century, dutiful and God-fearing as any youngster of Puritan days, develops into a character perfectly consistent with the promise of her childhood—industrious and even-tempered, with her thoughts turned towards marriage with Ralph McBride. And always, whether one is slicing bacon or sewing for the heathen—remember to mind what Grandmother says.

The reader gets more than a little weary of Grandmother. A fine old woman she is—alas, no one can doubt it. But after she has successfully misdirected Ada's life, until Ada takes things into her own hands, she continues as the kind-but-firm dictator of the Fincastle destinies.

When at last Ada's pink-gingham purity is relaxed a bit and she becomes pregnant after a stolen week-end with her Ralph in the mountain cabin, the sin, one feels, is not so much that the union is unsanctified by Church and God, but unauthorized by Grandmother. Months later the matriarch is gathered to her probable reward and Ada is swept with remorse. "I have killed Grandmother." And unfortunately there is no member of the family with sufficiently rational mind to tell her that old women of four-score-and-ten years, full of years and rheumatism, after hardships, child-bearing and pioneering, do not die of grief because they are presented with bastard grandsons.

When the scene shifts from the Valley to the town the novel weakens perceptibly. As an authentic picture of staunch pioneer folk with a deep, quiet love of the old manse, the fireside, books, God's Mountain and their neighbors, it is superb. But with the introduction of depressions and bread-lines the interest is diffused. Homespun dialogue about batter-bread, wooden knitting needles, gooseberry preserves and morning prayers always loses the ring of truth when transferred to an atmosphere of radios and little boys who say "lousy". (What would Grandmother have thought?)

But this is a good book and worthy of the Glasgow tradition. It remains for the concluding paragraph to state that

**VEIN OF IRON*, by Ellen Glasgow. (Harcourt, Brace) \$2.50

the character of John Fincastle, a kind of Blue Ridge Emerson with a dash of Santayana, would be enough to build a novel. Next time, Miss Glasgow, may we have less of Grandmother and more about Father?

TRIAL BY ERROR

WE WHO ARE ABOUT TO DIE, by David Lamson
(Charles Scribner's Sons). \$2.50

(Reviewed by John Connolly)

IN THE fall of 1933 Mr. David Lamson, who had been employed as sales manager by the Stanford University Press, was convicted of the so-called bathtub murder of his wife and sentenced to hang. While he awaited the decision of the California Supreme Court on his appeal he lived for thirteen months in that part of San Quentin Penitentiary known as Condemned Row—a group of old cells looking out on the fortuitous Garden Beautiful and the hills beyond the patrolled wall. This book is written in terms of the men on the Row, so that the values defined are human values; but it is conceived in terms of society and society's responsibility for court and prison systems. What gives the whole its tragic unity is the sensitive and controlled intelligence of Mr. Lamson.

Before his studies the conception of a criminal class as such disappears. The condemned possess all the complexities of the normal person; they acquire, moreover, a deepened sense of propriety, extreme spiritual courage, and respect for each other's separateness. Mostly they are hanged, though some of them have their sentences commuted finally, and go to live in the Yard. They do not discuss their pasts, out of a feeling for relevancy and for the truth of the proposition that every man is innocent of the crime of which he is convicted. And Mr. Lamson shares their feelings.

As his studies enlarge, he shows that all the prisoners have been wronged as a group, if not by the "blotter" practice or a corrupt judicial machinery, then by a social system that resolves property into a temptation. For property remains the concern of the individual. Under such conditions we may expect anarchy of a kind, since the theory of individual rights of possession, before the claim of need and equality, may be felt to turn back on itself. Hence it is not surprising that two-thirds of the crimes committed are crimes against property*. The inherited evils of the pioneer spirit on the one hand, and of government patronage on the other, may have established the state of mind that such lawlessness expresses.

Mr. Lamson writes especially well when he renders conversation and analyzes basic feelings or customs. He demonstrates that even amid ignominious disaster the human spirit is still capable of dignity.

UNFAIR TO THE FILIPINO

SOUTHEAST OF ZAMBOANGA, by Vic Hurley
(E. P. Dutton & Co.) \$3

(Reviewed by Harry C. Steinmetz)

HARDLY worth reading, but necessary to review because already too well received. There are many in California, where reside thousands of former residents, who have bought it; and it will do well in drug store circulating libraries.

Hurley has caught a bit of Malayan mysticism and tropical madness; or rather, again, it has caught him, for he reveals himself as the type of individualist who must be beaten by experience before grasping anything. He reveals it more than his naive folly in attempting single-handed to establish a coconut plantation in the infested backwoods of primitive

*These fractions apply to California, but they will probably hold true for most of the states.

Mindanao. (It is true that he says he had a partner, but relations seem not to have been very warm.)

Self-reliant and not unkindly, Hurley is of the pioneer stuff that should have done well in the seventeenth century. The reckless youthful zest of a wealth-seeking entrepreneur is to-day an anachronism even in the literal peripheral jungle of capitalism, and after the year described in this book the adventurer became and is, I believe, a corporation official.

Three times I have lived in the Philippine Islands since I was ten years of age; for three years only occasionally did I see American boys and girls within ten years of my own age. As a youth some years younger than Hurley was I tramped the Bukidon country of the Visayas, watched the Negritos dance, and wandered into an Ifugao village shortly after one of the last known head hunts. If Hurley is warm on the main scent of racial trend in the archipelago, then I am a bloodhound.

Hurley speaks with typical insular (Republican) superiority of the people among whom he chose to reside. I remember parroting the bromidic lines in my teens, and yet thanks to my unselfish parents, I never stooped to the stupid and false assertion that "there is no gratitude in the Filipino nature". There is a sour note in that whine.

We taught the Filipinos our revolutionary history and clumsily united the tribes, vaccinated and incorporated them, gave them mechanical gadgets worth a dollar and took raw materials worth a dollar-and-ten; and during the long warm evenings the Hurleys and the Standard Oil officials sat in white-men's clubs drowning their curses against the country in long cold drinks until faithful brown boys gently guided them to bed. Hurley has apparently never heard of the contradictions of capitalism.

Perhaps I should apologize for seeking ideas in strange places. But have you read the penetrating works of Dr. Jose Rizal, great Filipino martyr of 1896?

SOPHOMORIC

"OUR LORDS AND MASTERS", by the Unofficial Observer. (Simon & Schuster) \$3.50

(Reviewed by Jane Jollyman)

VIGNETTES of antagonists in the international political arena, written in a manner to induce the belief on the part of the reader that he is getting the "low-down", are the only readable parts of this "political treatise". They result in a gargantuan cocktail of international politics—shaken up well, but raw with truths half-stated and interpretations deliberately misleading. It is the writing of Jay Franklin, "unofficial observer" for *Vanity Fair*, a book anyone might be forgiven for mistaking as the worst of a college sophomore or a Hearst man.

As an interpreter of his facts, Mr. Franklin is not only sophomoric, however, but malicious. One may laugh at his idea that other nations will fight to preserve England because of her saving them the trouble of conquering outlying dominions and making them into markets for imperialists, or that other nations fought in the World War to save France because she had produced writers and artists, or that all the world is against Germany because of a bad conscience (these are the *bon mots* of his "essays in political psychology"); but his defense of the rule of Hitler and Catholicism, coupled with anti-Semitism, and his assertion of a "veiled anti-Semitic program in the U. S. S. R.", based without logic on the expulsion of the "international Trotsky", and without mention of the Semitic program in the Soviet Union, are different matters. They make him unreliable and not so funny.

It goes without saying that when the breath is sufficiently foul to bring a bad aroma over Communism, Mr. Franklin breathes deeply of the prospects of future mass rule in Europe. On his last page he makes an attempt to forget catch-

penny phrases and college humor; he admits that economic union of the world with the Soviet Union is probably the only way to preserve the people and to raise the standards of living of Europe. But he can't quite keep his perch on that high level of rationality. "At what price to religion and economic institutions will this union be formed," he sighs, "at what price!" I offer this paraphrase of his wail as an unparalleled example of something in Mr. Franklin's ideology which you yourself may name.

STRONG PICTURES

HUMANITIES, by John and Ruth Vassos. (E. P. Dutton)
\$5

(Reviewed by Suzanne Hedger)

HERE is a book of pictures, strong pictures with strong texts, showing an artist's reaction to the disorders and absurdities of Western civilization to-day. Paradoxically titled *Humanities*, it illustrates in a striking manner the inhumanity of the capitalist world. Many of the pictures are labeled in the same spirit of bitter irony. "Peace", "Disarmament", "Emancipation", show armies marching, nations frantically preparing for war, Negroes being lynched and refused justice or jobs.

The book is full of stark satire, forcefully and graphically presented, and the accompanying texts by Ruth Vassos add to and round out the whole. If anything, they are at times unnecessarily obvious, overemphasizing what the pictures have already clearly stated.

Mr. Vassos has used a style of almost poster-like flatness in his illustrations, which is very effective, if not carried too far. They are cleverly, though somewhat mechanically, drawn and compositionally very interesting. By carefully eliminating all unnecessary details and massing his forms rhythmically, he achieves a stark yet subtle simplicity.

One feels that this book is the strongly and sincerely felt protest of a sensitive man against the cruel jumble of present-day life. Unfortunately it leaves the reader somewhat flat. Mr. Vassos shows many things that are wrong, but offers no solution, no way out, and ends the book in a spirit of futile impotency, almost warning the public to do nothing about this mess he has depicted but just to let the matter drop. And above all, "not to let our emotions betray us into rash actions". And so, we feel, he shows the same spirit of slavish submission that he satirizes.

FOR BOYS--AND GIRLS

GONE IS GONE, by Wanda Gág. (Coward-McCann, Inc.) \$1

JAMAICA JOHNNY, by Berta and Elmer Hader. (Macmillan Co.) \$2

GRINDSTONE FARM, by Henry B. Lent. (Macmillan)
\$1.75

TRIGGER JOHN'S SON, by Tom Robinson. (Viking Press) \$2

(Reviewed by Dorothea Castelhun)

GONE is Gone is an amusing, very tiny book telling a story of a peasant who wanted to do housework. Wanda Gág says it was her favorite story when she was a child and, not being able to find it in any collection, she has here told it in her own words "consulting no other sources except one—my own memory of how the tale was told to me when I was a girl".

Jamaica Johnny tells the story of a little native boy who carves gourds and sells them to tourists; who wouldn't go to school until he was given a book, left him by his dead mother, which he found he couldn't read; who had many adventures in connection with some visiting white children; and

who has a most engaging smile, according to the delightful watercolor sketches which make this book unusually attractive. Never having cared specially for illustrations consisting of crude drawings such as children themselves could fashion, I found these true-to-nature pictures in *Jamaica Johnny* particularly pleasing. There are six full-pages in color and many others—they give the tropical landscapes and atmosphere in a manner appealing to any age.

Grindstone Farm is the latest addition to a fine series of books for boys and girls. They are a godsend to the parents who find that a fairly good general knowledge about railroads, steamships and so forth is far from adequate when young son starts shooting questions. The business of farming is here dealt with thoroughly, from plowing to County Fair exhibiting. Another striking example of the difference between the modern way of presenting information to the young and our old insipid "picture books" of a few decades ago!

In *Trigger John's Son* we find a story of humor and underling, perhaps one of the best boys' books of the season. Trigger, an orphan, is sent from Maine to a small town in Pennsylvania to be adopted, if he meets with the approval of the prospective foster parents. Trigger "considered the arrangement unfair"—because, after all, even if they liked him, suppose he didn't like them! He therefore decides to size up his proposed parents "before they had a chance to size up him". His subsequent adventures are excellently told and I have a strong feeling that *Trigger John's Son* is going to be a favorite book for a long time of my eight-and-a-half-year old son.



CONTRIBUTORS TO THIS ISSUE

CAROL GRISHAM is a graduate in economics of the University of Chicago, now living in San Francisco.

CHARLOTTE HAYES is a newspaperwoman in Kansas who contributes to the Kansas City "Star". She spent last summer in California.

JOHN CONNOLLY holds a James Phelan Scholarship from the University of California and is working on a novel.

HARRY C. STEINMETZ is an associate professor in the department of psychology and philosophy at San Diego State College. He is also president of the San Diego County Federated Trades and Labor Council.

SUZANNE HEDGER lived in Europe for seven years. She studied painting in Paris with Paul Burlin and music at the Academy of Vienna. She is now living and painting in Carmel, California.

MARION PINKHAM is a critic living in San Francisco. She was on the city desk of the Tulsa (Okla.) "Tribune" for a few years and has done literary criticisms for the Monterey Peninsula "Herald" and other papers.

DEAN BESHICH is a California poet and student of sociology. He is the author of "The Western Shore" and "Geneva", two poems published during the past year in "Pacific Weekly".

CORRESPONDENCE

IN REBUTTAL

Editor, Pacific Weekly

In the absence of President Sproul I am acknowledging your letter of December 8. There is a material misstatement of fact in the last half of paragraph four of the story which you plan to run on the so-called "Key Case". Dean Miller made every attempt to check on Key's eligibility, and the fact that he was misinformed should not open him to the charge of being either negligent or dishonest. His actions throughout the entire affair have been above reproach.

As to the other items mentioned in your proposed article [published Dec. 16], it is presumed that you have verified what you intend to state as fact. So far as Mr. Key's eligibility is concerned, the University made a thorough examination and took the necessary

steps to disqualify him. Other than this the University is not informed on the charges which your article implies.

University of California

Dec. 10, 1935

A. R. Robb

Secretary to the President

Editor's Note—Replying to Mr. Robb, we desire to say that his defense of Dean Miller requires that we give additional details of the Key affair, details that were omitted from Mr. Belmont's article and which actually put the administration of U.C.L.A. in anything but a favorable light. These are the facts:

When Key entered the school as Ted Key, Dean Miller went to bat on his behalf—and on behalf of U.C.L.A.'s football prospects. Signed by Dean Miller a letter was sent to each institution in the Pacific Coast Conference, admitting that the Texan had used an assumed name in professional football, but pointing out as extenuation, the story of parental opposition.

The letter closed with these words:

"This fall he . . . presented his own high school credits under his right name. He has an exceptional high school record, and probably could enter any school in the country. He therefore had no need of going to a preparatory school. He came to my office and explained that he had been told that his having competed under an assumed name made him permanently ineligible.

"I have assured myself that the boy's record is as stated above and I do not feel that he is the type of boy or that his case is the type of case for which the rule on assumed names was designed. I believe he could properly be cleared and given his chance to participate in college athletics."

In assuring himself as to the boy's record, Dean Miller had no check by means of photos or other identifications with the high school from which came the credits which Key offered as his own. Not until the Dean's hurried expedition in early November was a verdict given on such a photograph by Robert E. Vaughn of Pan-

handle High School. That verdict positively identified the fullback as Clois Key—whom Vaughn had coached at Vernon High nearly ten seasons ago.

During the belated investigation of the Key case, the puzzle was made still more baffling by a contradiction between Dean Miller and Superintendent Vaughn's statements. Dean Miller said he had sent Vaughn a picture of Key for identification when the question of identity first arose; and that the picture had been returned with a letter from Vaughn stating that all was in order—the subject of the picture had gone to Panhandle High. Superintendent Vaughn told newspapermen that he had never sent such a letter.

In Amarillo, Texas, the U.C.L.A. faculty representative, after Key had been identified as an impostor beyond all doubt, told newspapermen: "It just looks like we lose a good fullback."

SERVICE STATION UNION

Editor, Pacific Weekly

Your article, Service Station Feudalism, was good, but it lacked very pertinent facts. Here they are.

Twelve hundred filling station operators in San Francisco have already joined the Filling Station Employees No. 19570. Organizational work is being done in Oakland and other Bay cities.

The union includes employees of independents and the major companies. Of the major companies Shell fires militants whether or not they belong to the union and Standard furnishes open opposition with its company union.

The consumer who wishes to abolish service station feudalism can be of tremendous help. He should trade only at a station whose employees are 100 per cent union. Union members wear buttons. If you don't see a button, tell the men why and drive out.

Berkeley, California

Al Gordon

"THEY TELL ME—"

SARA BARD FIELD's new book of poems, "Darkling Plain", has been accepted for publication by Random House. This will be her fifth book; two were privately printed; the others were "The Pale Woman" and "Barabab". The latter won the Commonwealth Club's Gold Medal in 1933. Adding Sara Field to his list must make Bennett Cerf the publisher of the largest number of California writers; the others on his list are Jeffers, Saroyan, Tillie Lerner and Gale Wilhelm.

CLEVE CARTMILL of "United Progressive News" sends me the following:

"Banners waved. Leather throats hurled shouts of joy at the sky. Two thousand union men marched around a new building. Inside the building, a press crew locked semi-circular lead plates on a new press. The foreman pressed a button. The two thousand union men outside split the welkin.

"Thus the Los Angeles 'Examiner' was born!

"Back in those days, William Randolph Hearst's editorials were as pro-labor as they are now fascist in tone. His chain circulation of 24,000,000 was made possible by his appeal to the working man, his apparent defense of labor's rights.

"Although Hearst is a famous contemporary American, the actual facts of his career are known to few. No adequate biography of the man exists.

"Two men have labored a year. They have consulted some 300 volumes of history, biography and memoirs in which Hearst is mentioned. They have pored through magazines back to the time of old George Hearst. They have interviewed over 1000 individuals. They have thumbed yellow newspaper files and labored through Congressional Records.

"They have written a book, 'The Lord of San Simeon'.

"The two men are Oliver Carlson and Ernest Sutherland Bates. Viking Press will publish their 100,000-word biography of Hearst in March or April of the coming year.

"In 'The Lord of San Simeon' Hearst is shown as a modern parody of medieval feudal lords. His life is portrayed objectively and

boldly. As the 'Millionaire Radical', as a movie magnate, as the protector and 'press agent of his favorite actress, as the 'protector of the poor', Hearst appears in many guises.

"The book shows how Marion Davies has received millions of dollars worth of publicity—'must' stuff—and has failed to score a great box office success. It tells of movie-colony parties in San Simeon, and how each guest is forbidden to mention the word 'death' in 'The Master's' presence.

"Much of the information collected by Carlson and Bates was unprintable. They have managed nevertheless to paint a complete portrait, and with their pen have pricked a few bubbles: such as the philanthropy of old George Hearst, and the humane attitude of his son."

ONE OF THE most eagerly awaited novels of the early spring is Robert Cantwell's next book, "The Enchanted City", to be published by Farrar & Rinehart. It will have the San Francisco general strike as its background. Cantwell was living in Carmel at the time (working on his life of E. A. Filene with Lincoln Steffens), but he went up to San Francisco to report the strike for the "New Republic" and later he moved to Oakland. The Sunday silence of those busy city streets on a week day was startling enough to inspire any work of art.

THE JOHN STEINBECKS have returned from Mexico and are back in their cottage in Pacific Grove. Carol Steinbeck has a lot of Mexican doodads.

Steinbeck's next novel, about the Filipino lettuce pickers around the Salinas Valley, is coming out in January, published by Covici-Friede. It is called "In Dubious Battle". The approach is rather psychological than political and no "side" is taken.

HAakon M. CHEVALIER has sent off his translation of André Malraux' new novel to the publishers, Smith & Haas. In French the book is called "Le Temps du Mépris" and the tentative English title is "The Pillory of Hate". This columnist wanted to know why a literal translation, "The Times of Despising", might not be better. Lincoln Steffens

suggested "The Age of Contempt". The book is an intensely emotional and moving account of a prisoner's nine days in a German concentration camp, where, beaten and tortured, he faces man's essential loneliness. In this half-conscious state, on the verge of losing his mind, life passes before him in its beauty and nobility, a series of tableaux.

Man had the power to reduce fellow man to such a state, and it is the helplessness of the sensitive in the hands of the unimaginative who have been given full power over them that the title might cover. Since titles of books dealing with questions of to-day may become part of our political equipment (as "It Can't Happen Here" has already become)—the title of a book like this is a matter of no small importance.

Chevalier, who is a sensitive and subtle translator, is now completing the English version of Louis Aragon's "Les Clôches de Bale" for Harcourt, Brace.

ELLA WINTER

CLASSIFIED ADS

VICTOR PHONOGRAPH RECORDS of Mexican, other unusual, and classic music for Christmas gifts. At the AZTEC STUDIO SHOP, Carmel, California.

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MENTION PACIFIC WEEKLY WHEN YOU ANSWER ADVERTISERS



NEXT WEEK

THE ESSENTIAL LIFE OF CHRISTIANITY

By George Hedley.

The reply of a Christian minister to Robert Briffault's "The Essential Lie of Christianity" in **PACIFIC WEEKLY**, October 14.

"WASHINGTON, THE MOST RADICAL STATE"

You will notice that the title of Mr. Cliff Mosby's article is quoted. This is a statement of Farley's man Friday, "Emil Hurja". Mr. Mosby tells how radical Washington state is.

WHO COVERS THE WATERFRONT?

An interesting and intimate picture of the San Francisco Waterfront news sources, by Dudley Soles.

AN AMUSING SHORT STORY by Peter Quince.

AND, OF COURSE

Lincoln Steffens, Hollywood Column, Book Reviews and what Ella Winter says "They Tell Me—".

IN

PACIFIC WEEKLY

ANNOUNCING--

Elmo A. Robinson, associate professor of Philosophy at the State College, San José, California, has written for **PACIFIC WEEKLY** a vastly interesting and informative series of articles on "The Nature of American Ideals".

Professor Robinson wrote 300 letters to persons of various occupations asking for comment and advice in his preparation for a course he planned on American ideals. The answers he received were illuminating, and as varied as the nature, temperament and vocation of the various writers.

His series in **PACIFIC WEEKLY** will be divided into four installments, under the headings: "Is There a Consensus of Opinion?", "Are the Ideals Held by Americans American Ideals?", "What Do Intelligent Americans Believe?" and "Some Semi-Philosophical Conclusions".

Beginning January 2 in

PACIFIC WEEKLY

A FULL HAND

Thanks for the sample copies. I like the journal awfully well and subscribed at once for it. This week's issue hasn't come yet, but am hoping it will turn up on Monday. I'd hate losing a single copy of it. How stimulating and searching it is!

—Don Jonson

I have taken small space in the S. F. Chronicle, the S. F. News, the Socialist Pulse, the Argonaut, and the Labor Clarion. Except the News, I have spent more money in your publication than in any of the others, yet in proportion to the money spent, the space taken in **Pacific Weekly** has been more resultful than that in any other medium.

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